

Dr. Ambedkar As The Member of Executive Governor General Council Questions and Answers

PART VII

From 14th September 1942 to 12th April 1946

281

Electrical Commissioner's Report

541. Mr. Manu Subedar : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member state why a copy of the report produced by the Electrical Commissioner with the Government of India has not been placed in the library of the House ?

(b) Has the Policy Committee, in connection with power, reported ?

(c) If so, will a copy of their report be made available to the Members of the Legislature ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Presumably the Honourable Member refers to the proceedings of the Technical Power Conference of which the Electrical Commissioner was the Chairman. The report is under print and a copy will be placed in the Library of the House as soon as the printed copies become available.

(b) and (c). Presumably the reference is to the second meeting of the Policy Committee held on 2nd February 1945. The Record of the meeting is being finalised and copies will be placed in the Library of the House in due course. The Record of the first meeting of the Committee is already available in the Library of the House.

282

Scheduled Castes Employees of Central Public Works Department

556. Mr. **Piare Lall Kureel** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) the number of members of the scheduled castes employed in the Central Public Works Department as Executive Engineers, Sub-Divisional Officers and Subordinates in the permanent, temporary and work-charge staff, separately ;

(b) whether it is a fact that none of the temporary incumbents of the posts of Subordinates belonging to the members of the scheduled castes were confirmed as permanent staff during the year 1944 ; and

(c) what measures Government propose to take to secure a fair representation of the members of the scheduled castes among the permanent staff of the Central Public Works Department ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). The number of permanent and temporary Executive Engineers in the Central Public Works Department is 12 and 55 respectively. Two of the temporary Executive

Engineers are members of the Scheduled Castes. There are no officers of that community among the permanent Executive Engineers and there are no posts of Executive Engineers borne on the work charged establishment.

The rest of the information required by the Honourable Member is not readily available. It is being collected and will be supplied to him as soon as possible.

(c) Under the orders regarding communal representation in the Public services, one out of every twelve vacancies (other than vacancies filled by promotion) is set aside for members of the Scheduled Castes. These orders, which are generally applicable to all classes of posts in the Central Public Works Department will secure a fair representation for members of the Scheduled Castes, in that Department.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : May I ask whether the Scheduled Castes are reckoned as one of the minorities so that their share comes from 33 percent?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They are a separate category.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad : Then if you put them in a separate category how will the percentage of 33 per cent, reserved for minorities, be affected by this category ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is not affected at all; it is quite apart from that.

283

Liens on New Delhi Quarters of Government Servants Transferred to Calcutta and Bombay

564. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that allotment to Government servants of Government quarters at New Delhi is made according to seniority in service which is reckoned from the date of a person's continuous appointment at New Delhi/Simla ;

(b) whether such persons transferred to Simla hold their liens on quarters at New Delhi during the period of their transfer ;

(c) whether Government laid down recently that officers transferred to the Branch Secretariat at Calcutta are also allowed to retain liens on Government quarters at New Delhi whereas those transferred to Attached Offices will not be eligible for this privilege ;

(d) whether it is a fact that the staff transferred to Calcutta with the office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Central Public Works Department, was allowed to retain liens on their quarters at New Delhi and were allotted quarters on their return to Delhi ;

(e) whether it is a fact that the period of break in the continuous employment of certain persons employed in the Central Public Works Department which occurred on account of their transfers to places other than Simla has been condoned on their re-transfer to Delhi, as a special case;

(f) whether it is a fact that the Central Government servants transferred from Delhi to Calcutta, Bombay, etc. in the interest of service are not allowed to hold liens on their quarters at New Delhi and on their return to New Delhi are considered not to be continuously employed for the purpose of allotment of quarters ; and

(g) whether Government propose to accord such persons the same treatment as is accorded in the cases mentioned in parts (c) and (e) above ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. (b) Persons transferred to Simla on or before 10th November, 1942 retain liens on quarters occupied by them in New Delhi but those transferred to Simla after that date temporarily are allowed to retain liens for a period of one year from the date of their transfer.

(c) Yes.

(d) Two members of the staff of the Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Central Public Works Department were allowed to retain the quarters allotted to them in Delhi for the period of their stay in Calcutta which was less than one year.

(a) Yes, but the break in such cases was under one year.

(f) Central Government servants are allowed to retain liens on their quarter if the Departments concerned certify that the individuals will return to Delhi within a period of one year.

(g) Does not arise, in view of reply to part (f).

284

Production Cess on Coal Mines

565. **Prof. N. G. Ranga :** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if Government have levied a Production cess of Rs. 1-4-0 on portion of coal despatched from mines in British India ?

(b) Is the cost of recruiting unskilled labour from Gorakhpur, Ballia and other districts of the United Provinces and their maintenance at the coal fields defrayed out of the proceeds of the cess ?

(b) What is the Contract Form the labour (including women) have to sign ? Will Government place on the table of the House a copy of the order under which this labour is recruited and their contract form ?

(d) What is the machinery to recruit them ?

(e) Where are they usually stationed ?

(f) What was the approximate number of this labour at the various coalfields on the 31st December 1944 ?

(g) Have separate camps been established for them ? If so, are latrine and bath-room conveniences provided ?

(h) How many batches have been sent by now and what is their numerical strength ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes.

(b) The expenditure is initially met by Government. A part of it is recovered from mine owners and the balance is recouped from the Production Cess Fund.

(c) No form of contract is signed by labourer who verbally agree to serve for a period of 6 or 12 months.

(d) Labour Supply Depot, Gorakhpur, run by the Government of the United Provinces.

(e) Coalfields in Bengal and Bihar and Singareni colliery in Hyderabad.

(f) (i) Bengal/Bihar coalfields. 15,400. (ii) Singareni Colliery. 2,500.

(a) Yes, latrines are provided in most camps and will soon be provided in all, but not bath-rooms. Adequate water supply is however made available.

(h) The total number of labourers despatched is : Bengal/Bihar coalfields. 37,000. Singareni collieries. 5,000.

285

Medical Aid at Coal Mine Workers Camps

566. **prof. N. G. Ranga** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to say if there is any provision for rendering medical aid to the coal mine workers at their camps ?

(b) If so, has any schedule been drawn up for maintaining any minimum stock of medicines and surgical instruments at such camps ? What is the number of medical staff and their qualifications ?

(c) Is there any arrangement for the treatment of venereal diseases at these camps ?

(d) Is any record maintained of the incidence of sickness ?

(e) If so, what is the total number of cases of malaria and venereal diseases from the beginning of these establishments of the labour camps up to the 31st December, 1944 ?

(f) Is there any arrangement for periodical medical examination of the workers ?

(g) If so, what are the diseases most prevalent which these examinations show and their percentage ?

(h) Have any deaths taken place ? If so, how many and due to what reasons ?

(i) Is there any supervision machinery for the Medical Department of the Camp? Does the total Civil Surgeon visit the camps and treat serious cases ? Are serious cases taken to Civil Hospitals ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes.

(b) An adequate stock of medical supplies and surgical instruments are kept at each camp. One graduate in medicine is in charge of each camp with more than 1,000 labourers ; while one licentiate in medicine is in charge of each camp with less than 1,000 labourers.

(c) Yes.

(d) Yes.

(e) The camps, are spread over a large area and it has therefore not been possible to collect the information in the time available.

(f) Yes.

(g) Anemia. In this case also time is required to collect the statistics asked for.

(h) yes. 156 up to end of last December. The majority of deaths is due to natural causes. A small number is due to accidents at work sites. (i) Yes. A post of chief Medical Officer of the Directorate of Unskilled Labour Supply has been sanctioned. In view of the special provisions made the total Civil Surgeon does not visit the camps. Serious cases are taken to Civil Hospitals.

286

Rations at Coal Mine Workers Camps

567. **Prof. N. G. Ranga** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if the workers living at these mining labour camps are provided with rations directly by Government or through a contractor ?

(b) Is each worker allowed to draw his ration separately or are the rations given in bulk to a gang of fifty men ?

(c) Is it a fact that labour are usually supplied short weights by the contractor ?

(d) Can this labour purchase their rations from the Total Government Ration Shops or Depots ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Workers in mining labour camps are issued rations by Government through a contractor under the supervision of Group Officers.

(b) Rations are issued weekly in bulk for each gang.

(c) No.

(d) No, as they are issued free Government rations.

287

Corporal Punishments at Coal Mine Workers Camps

568. **Prof. N. G. Ranga** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that corporal punishment is being given to the workers at these coal mining labour camps ? Does this apply to men and women both ?

(b) Does any machinery exist for the redress of these workers' grievances?

(c) Are the Labour Welfare Adviser to the Government of India and his Assistants or the Coal Mines Welfare Commissioner and the officers under him empowered to look after the welfare of these workers or conduct inquiries into their grievances ? If not, why not ?

(d) If so, who investigates their complaints ?

(e) Is any record maintained of these cases ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No. There are no women's

camps.

(b) Yes. The workers can approach the Deputy Director Labour Supply (Coal) for redress of grievances.

(c) No. The Labour Camps are looked after by the Deputy Director Labour Supply (Coal) and his staff.

(d) Chief Liaison Officer and the Group officers of the Unskilled Labour Supply Directorate.

(e) If cases are submitted in writing, the records are kept in the office of the Deputy Director Labour Supply (Coal). Oral complaints are dealt with on the spot. Where considered necessary records are kept.

288

Mica Commission

661. Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please slate the object of appointing the Mica Commission ?

(b) What were its terms of reference and composition ?

(c) What assistance have Government rendered at any time to the mica producers of this country ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member presumably refers to the Mica Enquiry Committee. His attention is invited to Resolutions No. MD-55, dated 15th May, 1944 and 23rd October 1944, copies of which have been placed in the Library of the Indian Legislature.

(c) Under the Government of India Act, 1935 Mineral Development is a Provincial subject except to such extent as is declared by a Federal law to be expedient in the public interest. No such federal law at present exists and Mineral Development has therefore been left entirely to Provincial Governments. But even so during the war the Central Government has given considerable assistance to mica producers in helping them to get supplies and by allowing the bonus on excess production to be free of excess profits tax.

Mr. Manu Subedar : Is it a fact that Government have controlled the price of mica and that bulk of the mica has been purchased both for this Government and for the Allied Governments at controlled prices, and that the control has been introduced by the Central Government ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Prices have been Fixed.

Mr. Manu Subedar : May I know how these prices compare with the pre-war prices ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: They compare very favourably.

Mr. Manu Subedar : How much is the difference ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I must have notice of that question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask whether the Mica Commission is going to

consider the conditions of work of the mica miners, and, if so, whether the miners are represented on the Mica Commission ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : No, that is not one of the subjects which the Commission will make enquiries about.

Mr. G. W. Tyson : With reference to part (c) of the question, will the Honourable Member say whether he is satisfied that during the war, in which period the Central Government has had a good deal to do with the mica industry, Government has accorded protection to the mechanised mining companies which have suffered very heavy losses as a result of the illicit trade in mica ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : That is one of the reasons why the Committee was appointed.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I know if the Maternity Benefit Act is applied to mica factories ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It applies to all mines.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Is it a fact that the Factories Act is not applied to mica splitting factories. If so, why ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have no reason to believe that it is not applied.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I draw the attention of the Government to the report in the Trade Unions Record of September, 1944 ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Probably that might need further corroboration.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I ask whether the Honourable Member will make enquiries to find out whether the Factories Act applied to mica factories, or not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I will make enquiries.

289

Abolition of Distinction between Orthodox and Un-Orthodox Quarters

662. Mr. T. T. **Krishnamachari**: (a) With reference to the Honourable the Labour Member's reply to the adjournment motion on the 10th February, 1945, regarding the abolition of the distinction between orthodox and unorthodox quarters, will he be pleased to state whether other Departments of Government were consulted and which and how many of the Departments of the Government of India were for and against the proposal to abolish the distinction ?

(b) Has the Estate Officer been vested till now with the discretion to allow unorthodox quarters ? If not, why has he now been vested with such discretion ?

(c) What is the method or machinery by which the Estate Officer will be able to satisfy himself whether an applicant, who is an Indian, professes

European habits and thus becomes eligible for a unit in the unorthodox quarters ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. Government do not consider it necessary to specify the Departments who were against or in favour of the proposal.

(b) No. The Estate Officer will have no discretion in the allotment of unorthodox quarters as Government have decided that a declaration by an applicant in respect of his style of living should be accepted without question.

(c) Does not arise.

290

Abolition of Distinction Between Orthodox and Un-Orthodox Quarters

663. Mr. **T. T. Krishnamachari**: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether, according to his reply of the 10th instant in connection with the adjournment motion on the same subject, mentioned in the preceding question, it is proposed to disturb the provisional lien holders of unorthodox quarters ? If so, will they be allotted similar accommodation of the type to which they are eligible, if available ?

(b) In the event of such higher category accommodation not being available, is it the intention to allow them as heretofore to continue in the type of house they are already in occupation until such time as the higher type accommodation is available ? If not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The reply to the first part of the question is in the negative. The second part does not arise.

(b) Yes.

291

Break-Down of Trade Disputes Arbitration Machinery in Ahmedabad

668. Mr. **K. S. Gupta** : (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware of the serious situation arising out of the break-down of the permanent machinery of arbitration for settlement of disputes capital and industry in Ahmedabad ?

(b) Is it not a fact that the break-down is viewed with grave concern by the Joint Representative Board of the Textile Labour Association of Ahmedabad ?

(c) Do not Government of India propose to restore arbitration system ? If not, why not ?

(d) Is it not a fact that there is a written agreement of 1937 signed by both the Textile Labour Association and the Mill owners' Association of Ahmedabad ?

(e) Is it not a fact that the above said agreement is still unregistered and not acted upon by the Mill owners' Association ? If so, do Government propose to use their influence and power necessary to end the dispute ?

(f) Does the Government of India propose to encourage and help the

formation of a Labour Research Institute contemplated by the Textile Labour Association of Ahmedabad for the benefit of the working classes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am aware of the existence of a trade dispute over bonus between the Textile Labour Association and the Mill owners' Association, Ahmedabad, which has been taken up by the Chief Conciliator under the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938. I have no information regarding any breakdown of the arbitration machinery and other matters referred to in the question all of which are the concern of the Provincial Government.

292

Communal Composition of certain Staff under Labour Department

55. Sardar Sant Singh : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

- (a) the total number, and
- (b) the number of Sikhs,
- (c) Christians,
- (d) Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-indians, and
- (e) Parsis, appointed since 1934 in each grade of pay on
 - (i) permanent and
 - (ii) temporary basis, carrying a salary of Rs. 100 p.m. and above, in all the Departments and offices under him, giving the designations of Sikhs so appointed ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :** The time and labour involved in collecting this information will not be commensurate with the results to be achieved. The Government therefore regret their inability to furnish this information.

293

Profiteering in House Property Transactions in Delhi

57. Mr. Satya Narayan Sinha : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that a good deal of profiteering is going on in house property transactions in Delhi City ? If so, what action has been taken by Government to check it ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :** (a) Government have no information.

(b) The question does not arise but for the information of the Honourable Member I would state that Government have not passed any measure regulating the sale of private house property in Delhi City.

294

Labour officers' Training in Britain

810. Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state : (a) whether Labour Officers are being sent to the United

Kingdom for training;

(b) the object and course of training; and

(c) how many are proposed to be sent and the expenditure involved in this scheme ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) The object is to have experienced and suitably trained staff to tackle problems of labour administration, e.g., industrial relations including the settlement of Labour disputes, factory inspection, and labour welfare, wage regulation and inspection, employment exchanges, demobilisation and resettlement, which are of immediate importance to India. The course will cover mainly all the subjects enumerated above and will be conducted partly at the headquarters of the Ministry of Labour and partly in other centres in the United Kingdom. It will last for a period of about six to eight months.

(c) The intention is to send three batches of 20 officers each, each batch including 12 officers of the Central Government and eight of the Provincial Governments and States. Financial sanction has been accorded to the sending of 12 Central Government officers with the first batch of trainees and this will cost the Central Government about a lakh of rupees. The Provincial Governments and States will bear the expenditure in connection with their nominees.

Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable Member say how he proposes to make the selections ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: With regard to the selections of nominees of Provinces and States, the matter rests with them. With regard to the selection of officers from Centre it rests with the Central Government of India. If the point of my Honourable friend is whether communal proportions will be recognised in making the selections, I want to tell him that I do propose to apply that principle.

Sardar Sant Singh : Will preference be given to those who are better qualified so far as educational qualifications are concerned.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It will be one of the qualifications.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member whether these officers will be selected by the heads of the particular Departments or by some committee.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They are selected by the different Departments.

The Muhammad Yamin Khan : Are they officers already in Government service ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, they will be officers already in service.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I ask if Government will include women, as welfare of women workers is very important.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes.

295

The Mines Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, 1941.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is :

“ That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, 1941.” The Motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

296

The Factories (Second Amendment) Bill

Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : Sir, I present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Factories Act, 1934.

297

The General Budget-List of Demands—contd.

Mrs. Renuka Ray (Nominated Non-Official) : Sir, May I just say that I should like to move my cut motion No. 189 on the Consolidated List of Motions under Demand No. 23 under the head Department of Labour, after Mr. N. M. Joshi's motion, during the time allotted to Unattached Members. The Unattached Members, Mr. Frank Anthony and Sardar Sant Singh and Mr. Hooscinbhoy Lalljee, have agreed to allow my cut motion to take precedence over theirs. I have also notified the Honourable the Labour Member accordingly. I hope you will kindly agree to this arrangement.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) : Has the Government Member any objection to it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : I do not have any rights in this matter; the matter, I think, is entirely in your discretion. Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) : As the Honourable Member has got the permission of those unattached Members in whose time this motion will be moved and the Government have enough time till Monday or Tuesday to be ready with their reply to the motion, I think I shall allow the motion to be entered on the agenda.

298

Registered Trade Unions

814. **Mr. Manu Subedar** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state how many registered Trade Unions there are in India and what the total membership is ?

(b) What is the total number of persons employed in industrial concerns excluding State concerns ?

(c) On what basis have Government recognised Trade Unions for State

employees such as Posts, Telegraphs, Railways, etc. ?

(c) What channel have Government provided for representation of subordinate services in the Civil Departments of the Government of India of their legitimate grievances, particularly with regard to dearness caused by the war ?

(d) What assistance or contribution or grant, direct or indirect, has been given to labour Unions in India by the Government of India during the last five years and for what purposes ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) On the 31st March 1942, there were 747 registered unions and the membership of 455 unions out of these (which submitted returns) was 5,73,520. I regret later information is not available.

(b) According to the latest available reports the average daily number of persons employed during 1943 in private factories subject to the Factories Act, 1934, was about 21 lakhs and that in mines subject to the Mines Act, 1923, about 3 ½ lakhs. In the Assam tea plantations the average number of workers on the books was a little over 6 lakhs during 1942-43.

(c) A copy of the Rules regulating recognition of unions of industrial employees of the Central Government is laid on the table.

(d) Members of Subordinate Services in Civil Departments can represent their grievances either orally or in writing to the Heads of Departments or similarly placed officers or can approach such authorities or Government through recognised unions, staff councils or works committees, where they exist. It is also open to any aggrieved Government servant to make representations to the Head of his Department or the Government of India in accordance with the instructions laid down in Home Department Notification No. 106/38, dated the 24th August, 1938, a copy of which is laid on the table.

(e) The Railway Department grant to railway employees who are union officials certain facilities in regard to causal leave and free passes for railway journeys for attending meetings of the union. No other direct assistance is granted to labour unions as such by the Government of India.

299

Hours of Work, Wages, etc., of Labour in War Supplies Factories

936. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the number of hours for which the labour in factories producing War supplies and in the mines, has to work at a stretch, and what wages they are paid for their labour ?

(b) Do the same labour work in shifts in the same factories and mines ?

(c) What is the rate of overtime wages for labour in factories and mines ?

(d) What is charged for rations supplied to labour in factories and mines and what is the quantity allotted to each labourer in mills, factories and

mines ? Is there any officer appointed by Government to watch the Distribution of ration to labourers in factories, mills and mines ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: (a) Hours of work in Factories are regulated by sections 34, 36-38 of the Factories Act, 1934 and those in Mines by sections 22B and 22C of the Indian Mines Act, 1923. In the case of factories producing war supplies exemption has been granted by Provincial Governments in several cases from all or some of the provisions. Instructions have been issued that except for short periods and in emergent conditions, the hours of work should not exceed 60 a week. Ordinarily no exemption is granted from the statutory requirements as to intervals of rest. It is regretted that more precise information is not available.

Wage rates vary considerably in different classes of factories and mines and in different units in any particular class. I regret detailed information regarding wages or general averages of wages are not available.

(b) The question is not understood.

(c) Section 47 of the Factories Act, 1934, prescribes the rates of overtime wages in factories. No Exemption has generally been allowed from the provisions of this section. No overtime work is permissible in mines except in the case of an emergency involving serious risk to the safety of the mine or the persons employed therein.

(d) There is no uniformity in regard to prices charged for rations supplied to labour in factories and mills. But it is known that several employers do supply foodgrains, etc., at less than controlled rates and a large number of controlled rates.

In 'rationed' areas, workers receive the same scale of rationed articles as the general public. 'Heavy workers' are eligible for extra-rations. In addition, industrial canteens supplying cooked food now receive supplies outside the ration.

The basic standard weekly rations at controlled rates for coal-mine workers in Bihar consists of 4 seers each for the worker and adult dependent and 2 seers for a child and dal at one-fourth basic ration at a concession rate of 6 seers per rupee. In addition 1/2 seer of rice or other foodgrain is given free for each attendance at mines. Some of the collieries in Bengal have adopted the same scale with slight variations while others allow a flat rate of 6 seers per week per worker at reduced prices. In some collieries in the C.P. and Berar ration at concession rates is allowed on the scale of 6 seers a week per adult worker, 3 1/2 seers for each woman dependant and 1 3/4 for each child. No special officers of Government apart from the usual Food Rationing Organisations have been appointed to look after distribution of ration to workers. In respect of coal mines, however, six Ration Inspectors have been appointed, three for Bihar under the Bihar Government and three for Bengal attached to the Department of Mines.

Fixation of Minimum Living Wages of Labour

937. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Has the Honourable the Labour Member fixed the minimum living wages of labour in factories, mills and mines in accordance with the price of essential foodstuffs and clothing required by the labouring classes ?

(b) Is there any arrangement for the education of children of the labourers in the factories, mills and mines ? Is there any educational arrangement for adult labourers ?

(c) Is there any provision for holidays with pay in factories, mills and mines ? What arrangements are there for medical treatment ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) There is no legislation for fixing minimum wages for employees in factories including mills, or in mines.

(b) Educational facilities outside factories or mines whether for children of workers or for adult workers are provided by provincial authorities.

The owners of some undertakings have made provisions themselves for both purposes but no detailed information in this regard is available with me. The Honourable Member is no doubt aware that there is no legal obligation in this respect of the owners of industrial undertakings.

(c) There is no legal provision requiring holidays with pay to be given. As regards non-seasonal factories there is a Bill on this subject before this House which it has referred to a Select Committee.

Apart from legal provisions many concerns give to their employees holidays with pay to varying extent.

As regards medical treatment the only statutory provisions within factories and mines relate to the provision of first aid. Some concerns run dispensaries and hospitals but apart from these the employees have to depend on the medical facilities provided by the Provincial Governments.

Women Labour in Mines

938. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the number of women labour in the mines and if there is child labour in mines, i.e., minors in the mines. If so, what ages ?

(b) What maternity benefits are given to women in factories, mills and mines ? How long does the Honourable Member contemplate to continue women labour in mines ?

(c) What is the Function of the Labour Welfare Officers in the factories, mills and mines? What are their qualifications?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) In 1943 the number of women labour in mines was 72,403 (this figure includes those working above and underground). Figures for 1944 are not available. In accordance with the Indian Mines Act, no children are employed in mines.

(b) A comparative statement showing some of the important provisions of Legislation regarding maternity benefit at present in force (or in contemplation) is laid on the table of the House. Recent information from Bombay and Madras indicates that some of the mills in those provinces have increased the maternity benefit from the statutory rate of annas eight to annas twelve per day.

With regard to the second part of the question, there is no intention to withdraw women completely from work in mines.

(c) The functions of the Labour Welfare Officers generally are :

(i) to establish close contact between the employers and the workmen in all aspects of labour relations and conditions of work ;

(ii) to promote proper understanding, closer co-operation and mutual appreciation of difficulties, between the employers and the workmen;

(iii) to make constructive suggestions for workmen's welfare, and to co-ordinate and supervise all welfare activities of the undertakings ;

(iv) to acquaint themselves with the grievances of the workers, and to secure redress of such grievances and generally to attempt to remove causes of friction.

As regards qualifications while academic qualifications are given due importance, the essential qualification is that the candidates should have experience of social work, preference being given to those who have successfully undergone a recognised training course like that of the Calcutta University or the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work, Bombay.

Comparative Statement showing some of the important provisions of Legislation regarding maternity benefit at present in force (or in contemplation) in the provinces and the mines

Maximum Year Qualifying period in period for Rate of Penalty for Province
which(months) maternity maternity contravention passed benefits of Act by
(Weeks)employer

Province	Year in which passed	Qualifying period (months)	Maximum period for maternity benefits (Weeks)	Rate of maternity benefits

Bombay	1929	9	8	8 annas a day or Average daily wages, Whichever is less But in the cities of Bombay and Ahmedabad 8 annas a day.	500
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C.P. and Bihar	1930	9	8	8 annas a day or average daily w whichever is less.
Madras	1934	240 days (8 months) within a period of 1 year	7	8 annas a day.
U.P.	1938	6	8	8 annas a day or average daily w whichever is greater.
Bengal	1939	9	8	Ditto.
Punjab	1943	9	60 days	12 annas a day
Assam	1944	150 days	8	1. In planation Re. 1 per week for period before confinement and Rs. per week for the period confinement, provided the total payment is Rs. 14. 2. In other employments Rs. week or average weekly wage or s whichever is greater.
Mines (under the Indian Mines Maternity Benefit Act)	1941	6	8	8 annas a day

302

Training Indians in Labour Welfare in United Kingdom

939. Mr. **Arnarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that the Labour Department is going to send a considerable number of men for training in labour welfare to the U. K. ? If so, why Government cannot train these people in India ? What would be the cost of their training scheme ? What would be the minimum qualification required of such trainees ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) It is proposed to send in the First instance, three batches of 20 officers each, of whom about 12 will be officers of the Central Government and 8 of Provincial Governments and States. Financial sanction has been accorded to the sending of 12 Central Government officers with the first batch of trainees.

In the initial stages the training and experience necessary for labour

administration in the immediate post-war period cannot be acquired in India except by a lengthy process of trial and error. It is therefore, necessary to take advantages of the experience and practice of other more highly industrialised countries like the United Kingdom.

The cost to the Central Government is estimated at Rupees one lakh for the nominees in the first batch. The Provincial Governments and States will bear the charges in respect of their nominees.

The minimum qualifications are that the officers should be under Government employment or designated to fill posts under Government and should have experience of welfare work or administration of labour legislation. Officers having high educational qualification will be given preference.

303

Factory Inspectors and Labour Welfare Officers in Delhi Province

964. **Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) the number of Factory Inspectors and Labour Welfare Officers in the Delhi Province, and if they include women;

(b) whether these officers have reported on the urgency for providing proper residential quarters for workers in factories ; and, if so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take in the matter; and

(c) if the answer to (b) is in the negative, whether Government propose to call for an immediate report on the subject ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) There are two full-time Factory Inspectors and two Additional Factory Inspectors. The latter are part time. There is no Labour Welfare and Maternity Centre. Delhi Municipality, exercises the powers of an inspector under the Bombay Maternity Benefit Act, 1929 as extended to Delhi.

(b) No, the latter part does not arise.

(c) Government will take up for consideration in due course the general question of housing of industrial labour. It is not therefore proposed to call for special report in respect of Delhi Province only.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I know. Sir, if Government will consider the proposal to appoint a whole-time Woman Welfare Officer ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, I will consider that.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : What is the meaning of " due time " regarding housing ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I do not think it is a very unusual expression which requires explanation.

304

Contract System for Engagement of Labour in Delhi Factories

965. **Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state ; if labour is still engaged in factories in Delhi by

contract system ; and, if so, (i) the names of the factories who have that system ; (ii) the number of workers, men and women, employed under that system, by each of those factories; (iii) the average daily wage of the workers and the rate of dearness allowance ;

and (iv) if the workers receive the benefits under the Factories and Maternity Benefits Acts ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : Yes, in the case of some factories. A list of such factories is laid on the table. No information is available as regards the number of workers employed through contractors but the number of such persons is small and is limited to coal handling and loading. Information in regard to the average daily wage and the rate of dearness allowance is not readily available, but dearness allowance varies from Rs. 10 to Rs. 32 per month and in factories where no dearness allowance is paid the basic wages have been increased. All factory workers receive benefits under the Factories and the Bombay Maternity Benefit Acts.

List of Factories in Delhi in which part of the labour force is employed through Contractors referred to in question No. 965, dated the 13th March, 1945.

1. Biria Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills Ltd.
2. Mahabir Cotton Spinning, Weaving and Manufacturing Co., Ltd.
3. Delhi Ctoth and General Mills Co., Ltd.
4. Latifi Printing Press.
5. Gwalior Potteries Lid.
6. Ishwar Potteries Lid.
7. Delhi Ftour Mills Co. Ltd.
8. Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Ltd.
9. Tin Printing and Metal Works Ltd.
10. Ganesh Ftour Mills (Vegetable Products Factory).
11. Aggarwal Hosiery Mills.
12. Ordnance Ctothing Factory.
13. Malik and Qureshi.
14. H. S. Sidhu, 26, Dai-yaganj, Delhi.
15. Girdhari Lal Gauri Shanker Textile Factory.
16. Messrs. Pcarey Lal and Sons (Lahore) Ltd.
17. The Premier Textile Factory.
18. Phoenix Cotton Tape Factory.
19. Sharma Textile and General Manufacturing Co.,
20. Messrs. Aggcrihos and Co., 50-Garriston Bastion Road, Delhi.
21. Messrs. Aggerilios and Co., 11-B,FaizBazar, Daryaganj, Delhi.
22. British Niwar Factory.
23. Yadev Niwar Factory.
24. Delhi-Press.
25. Saksaria Printing Works.

26. British Motor Car, O. B. F. Co., Section.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Since Delhi is so near New Delhi will Government assure me that they will secure this information as soon as possible?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes, in due time.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : In view of the admitted evils of this contract system of recruiting labour, will Government take early steps to put an end to it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: This is not a matter in which Government is concerned.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : Is it not a fact that the Royal Commission on Labour recommended to the Government that they should take special steps to root it out ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : If my Honourable friend is referring to such labour as is employed through contractors in Government departments, that matter will certainly be considered.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I know whether Government consider welfare of labour recruited under contract system as not a matter of labour welfare ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : My Honourable friend is quite entitled to draw any inference he likes.

305

Average Wage of Women in Delhi Factories

967. **Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member please slate :

(a) the average wage of women employed in factories in Delhi ; and whether they are paid at a daily or monthly rate ;

(b) the dearness allowance paid to them ;

(c) if there is any difference in the wages and dearness allowance paid to the men and women workers doing the same kind of work ; and, if so, the reasons for the difference ;

(d) whether the women engaged under contract system receive the same wages and dearness allowance as those directly recruited, and the reasons for the difference, if any ?

(e) whether any of the factories provide facilities for maternity and Child Welfare ; and if so, in what manner;

(f) whether any of these factories provide creches and make other arrangements for the care of the children of their employees ; and

(g) if the answers to (c) and (f) are in the negative, whether Government propose to take immediate steps to compel the owners of factories to make the necessary arrangements ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Data in respect of the average wage of women employed in factories in Delhi is not readily available. In some factories women are paid at monthly rates and in others at piece or daily rates.

(b) No detailed information is available but the dearness allowance paid to women workers ranges from Rs. 10 to Rs. 32.

(c) So far as is known, there is no difference in wages and dearness allowance paid to men and women doing the same kind of work.

(d) So far as is known women in factories are engaged direct and not through contractors.

(e) Two factories provide facilities for maternity and child welfare.

(f) Yes, two factories provide crèches. In one factory free baths are provided daily to the children of employees and under-nourished children are supplied daily half a seer of milk free of cost. In the other factory free education is given to the children of employees in the school run by the factory and half a seer of milk each is given daily to all the children free of cost.

(g) Does not arise.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar : May I know whether the Province of Delhi has no Labour Department of its own ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I must have notice of that question ?

Mrs. **Renuka Ray** : May I ask whether it would surprise the Honourable the Labour Member to hear that there are 3,500 women in the thread ball factories who do not get any dearness allowance and that men and women are not paid equal wages and is he willing to inquire into this and if he finds it is so, will he take steps immediately to rectify their grievance ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am sure that nothing that comes from the Honourable lady will surprise me.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : With reference to his reply to part (a) that the information is not readily available, may I know whether he will make very special effort to make it available ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I will see what I can do.

Shrimati K. Raclha Bai Subbarayan : May I know. Sir if Factory Inspectors do not send periodical reports to the Government ? How is it that Government say that they have not got the information ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It must be going to the Chief Commissioner of Delhi.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : Sir, I wish to seek your guidance in regard to the reply given by the Honourable Member. It appears to me that it is a sort of aspersion cast upon a lady.

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) : I do not think the Honourable Member meant to cast any such aspersion. However, you ought to leave it to the lady who put the question to take care of herself.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Mr. President, especially today the replies of the Government Benches have been in a tone that is unusual and we had occasion to know about it from the Food Member. And now. Sir, the

reply of the Honourable Member to the lady is this. She asked whether he will enquire.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : No. Whether I would be surprised to know that.

Mrs. Renuka Ray: And would he be willing to look into the matter ?

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) : As regards the tone of the Honourable Member's reply to the question it is very difficult for me to judge for I am afraid so far as that is concerned it is not only one part of the House that is concerned.

(At this stage, several Honourable Members stood up and spoke simultaneously.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) : Order, order.

306

Re-employment of a Government Servant after Conviction

972. Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury : With reference to the reply to starred question No. 407 on the 14th March, 1944, regarding re-employment of a Government servant after conviction, will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether any enquiry was made in regard to the Government servant referred to in that question ? If so, what was the result of that enquiry, and what action was taken by Government ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes. Though the individual had been dismissed by the Punjab Government, that Government had permitted him to take up employment either in the Central Public Works Department or elsewhere. In view of this and the fact that he has been continuously employed in the Central Public Works Department since February, 1942, no further action was considered necessary.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani : What was the charge for which the particular person was dismissed by the Punjab Government?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Mere assault.

307

Post-War Plans for Improving Labour

1043. Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) whether Government have any post-war plans for improving labour in this country ; and

(b) whether they will consider the advisability of setting apart a portion of the profits of all organised industries for improving the standard of life and giving education to the labourers employed in the respective industries ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Government's Final plans in this respect have not been formulated.

(b) The suggestion will be considered along with others in implementing

Government's plans.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum : When are these plans likely to be formulated ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As soon as the investigating committee has reported.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum : May I know if there is a time limit for this committee to report ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes, they have promised to give us their report sometime in August next.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : Will Government consider the advisability of expediting their plans so that before the profits earned for this year are dissipated by the industries, they may be able to set apart a portion of the profits for improving labour conditions ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I shall bear the suggestion in mind.

308

Provision of Quarters for Mines

1054. Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) if residential quarters are provided for miners in all mining areas ; and if not, why not ;

(b) if no quarters are provided, what steps Government propose to take to ensure that miners have proper housing accommodation ;

(c) if Government are aware that the sanitary conditions in mining areas are very unsatisfactory and that lack of good housing accommodation and proper sanitation is seriously affecting the health of the miners and their families and thereby production; and

(d) if Government propose to consult the Tripartite Conference about the matter referred to in (c) ; and, if not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Residential quarters are provided for miners in the important mining areas.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Indian Mines Act lays down the primary requirements regarding sanitary and health provisions ; and the Mines Inspectorate sec that they are properly observed.

(d) I shall consider the suggestion.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Since the coal situation is very grave may I ask Government if they will appoint a Committee of Experts, Medical Health and Engineering, to go into the questions mentioned in (c) ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : We have already appointed a Coal Mines Welfare Committee by whom all these questions are considered.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi** : May I ask what proportion of miners are housed in the houses provided in the mining areas ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am afraid I must have notice of that question.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi:** The Honourable Member has made a wrong statement.

309

Restoration of Ban on Women Working Underground in Mines

1055. **Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan :** Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) if Government have seen the recent report of questions and answers in the House of Commons regarding women working underground in mines ; and, if so, whether and when Government supplied Mr. Amery with the information that he stated he had called for, and what that information is ;

(b) when Government will conclude the consideration of the question of restoring the ban on employment of women underground in mines;

(c) what steps Government have taken to prevent such hardships to women ; " are low but compare favourably with the pay in other industries in India " is based on facts ; and

(d) if the answer to (c) is in the affirmative, the rates of pay for women workers in other industries in India ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Government have seen the reports in question. They do not consider it in the public interest to disclose the nature and contents of their report to the India Office.

(b) The question of the restoration of the ban on the employment of women underground in mines is constantly under review.

(c) and (d) What the Secretary of State said was that the rates of pay " compare favourably with those of other industries in that part of India ". The only comparable labour is that employed on the neighbouring construction works, and Government believe that the statement is not far from truth.

(e) Arrangements have been made for ante-natal and post-natal care by the Mines Board of Health in the Jharia and Ranigunj coalfields. Some of the larger mines provide independent arrangements.

(f) Women doctors and adequate staff are employed at some of the large mines. Many mines provide midwives and nurses at hospital. The second part of the question does not arise.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : May I ask if Government will make uniform arrangements in all mines for the welfare of women ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : We have that matter under consideration.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi :** In view of the fact that the House has declared itself against the employment of women below ground, will the Government of India now impose the ban in accordance with the wishes of this Legislature ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar :** I thought that the decision of the House was more of a political demarcate than a decision on merits.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : He has wilfully misunderstood the intention of the House.

Mr. **Abdul Qaiyum** : On a point of order, is the Honourable Member free to put such an interpretation as to impute motives in regard to a well-considered decision of the House ? If so, it will be very difficult to carry on. We have an irresponsible Government, and if they are going to talk like this.....

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) : It is a speech you are making. On a point of order you cannot make a speech.

Mr. **Abdul Qaiyum** : Can he impute motives ?

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) : As I followed the Honourable Labour Member, I believe he wanted to convey to the House that the question was considered from more than one point of view including political. At any rate, I do not think he was imputing any wrong motive to the House by saying that the question has been dealt with on political grounds.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum : On a point of explanation, the official report of what the Honourable Member said may be referred to. He said it was a political deMarche.

Mr. N. M. **Joshi**: May I know if the Government of India reconsidered the question after the vote given by this Legislature ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have nothing to add to what I said.

310

Dr. Krishnan's Suggestions *re* Mineral Resources of India

1773. **Prof. N. G. Ranga** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state :

(a) If his attention has been drawn to the report of a lecture delivered by Dr. M. S. Krishnan to the Geology Association of the Presidency College, Madras, on the 14th of March, as reported in the *Hindu* of the 14th March;

(b) What steps are being taken to obtain adequate quantities and build up reserves of copper, silver, nickel, platinum, tin, mercury, graphite and potash;

(c) what steps are also being taken to develop and exploit hydraulic (electrical) power resources in all those provinces which do not have coal mines within easy reach, so as to develop total industries;

(d) whether any stops are being taken to draw power from wind through wind mills and to popularise the use of wind mills ; and (e) whether Dr. Krishnan's suggestion of establishing " well-equipped laboratories " to " assess the quality and quantity of the various minerals " and also his suggestion that totally available minerals shall be utilised in preference to imports will be fully studied ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. (b) During the war Government had a proposal under consideration to build up in India a

strategic stock of certain important minerals and related substances; but it did not materialise. Government are considering a revision of its which are in short supply in India.

(c) Generally speaking steps are being taken by Provincial and State Governments to develop and exploit Hydro-Electric Power Resources to the maximum extent of technical manpower at present available for such investigations. Central Technical Power Board is already assisting in certain cases subject to limit of its present strength in man-power and do more when adequate technical staff is procured. Government of India are fully aware of the necessity for far greater measure of Hydro-Electric System development throughout the country than is at present being undertaken, particularly in areas which are remote from major coal deposits, but they consider that this cannot be achieved without a far greater body of experienced technical personnel than at present exists and to this end are doing their utmost to recruit Specialists Technical personnel on contract.

(d) No special steps are being taken by Government of India to draw power from wind or to popularise use of Wind Mills at present. Government is advised that such installations, while useful in selected areas depending on Meteorological conditions, are individually productive only extremely small amounts of power and that too intermittently. (e) The Geological Survey of India has been lately re-organised and its laboratory facilities considerably expanded. Further expansion in the direction of providing free advice and information on mineral and mining matters is being taken up. The recently planned National Metallurgical and National Chemical Laboratories will be fully equipped to assess the quality of Indian minerals and in other ways prove of great assistance in the development of mineral industries. Domestic treatment and utilisation of India's minerals and ores, in preference to their export in the raw conditions, is being considered by Government. A number of industrial Panels, instituted since 1944, have collected valuable information and data under this head which are being studied for the framing of a new Mineral policy.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : As regards part (c), the Honourable Member says they need many more specialists in order to develop these hydroelectric power resources. What steps are Government taking to get Indians of requisite abilities and qualifications to specialise in these directions so that their services may be made use of?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : A number of Indians have been sent abroad for training in these specialised occupations.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : As part of this new scheme of sending scholars ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : In addition to them, there are also other people who have been sent.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : With reference to part (d), my Honourable friend threw cold water on the suggestion to utilise wind power by saying that it could only

give intermittent power and nothing more. In view of the fact that thousands of peasants are interested in these windmills, will Government try and look into this matter a little more carefully and devise ways by which they can possibly assist our peasants and others to draw as much power as is possible from wind and thus help them ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : As I said it depends upon how much wind there is in any particular area.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : There are meteorological experts and it ought to be possible for them to work out some plans and see how much power can be derived by utilising wind in different parts of the country ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Yes; we have considered that.

Mr. N. M. Joshi : May I know if the Government of India reconsidered the question after the vote given by this Legislature ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I have nothing to add to what I said.

311

Arrangements for Care of Miners' Children

1057. Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) the information received by Government about arrangements for the care of children and infants of miners since the reply given to starred question No. 436 on the 21st February, 1945 ;

(b) the information received by Government on the points raised in supplementary to that question; and

(c) whether milk is supplied free to infants and children of the miners ; and, if so, the quantity of milk given to each child according to age, and if no milk is given, the reason for not giving it ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). I have not yet received a report on all matters, but would first make clear that there is an absolute prohibition on women at any time taking babies underground, and themselves going underground for a period of 4 weeks after childbirth.

An enquiry made by the Lady Labour Welfare Officer a few months ago disclosed that women in an advanced state of pregnancy generally did not go underground and I have introduced a Bill which while giving longer benefit will prohibit them from going underground for 10 weeks before expected date of childbirth.

So far as I have ascertained no organised facilities exist for mothers to come to the surface to feed their babies at regular intervals, but the Lady Welfare Officer states that there is a tendency for women with children at home to leave the mines early to return to their homes.

(c) In a few mines only Government are examining further possibilities in regard to improvement of health of women and children in mining areas.

Prof. N. G. Ranga : In regard to that tendency for mothers who have left

their children at home to leave the mines a little early, are they made to suffer any loss of wages because they leave a little early, or are they encouraged to leave the mines early without loss of pay ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : They are paid by tubs : it is piece work.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : How many hours at a stretch do they work ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : It is piece work; they can go any time and come at any time.

312

Tea Garden Labourers sent on Assam Projects

1313. Dewan Abdul Basith Choudhury : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether he is aware that a large number of persons have been sent by the Managers of Tea Gardens to projects in Assam as labourers ?

(b) Is the Honourable Member also aware that no compensation has yet been granted to the dependants of many labourers who have lost their lives while engaged in project work ?

(c) Is it a fact that in those cases where compensation has been granted to the dependants of the deceased project workers, the amount paid is Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 ? Is this amount considered adequate ?

(d) Is the Honourable Member aware that the dependants of these unfortunate labourers are experiencing great difficulties in receiving payments of the compensation money ?

(e) Does the Honourable Member propose to consider the desirability of paying adequate compensation to the dependants of all labourers who have lost their lives in the projects ?

(f) Does he also propose to consider the desirability of paying the compensation money through the Sub-Divisional Office instead of through the Tea Garden Office ?

The Honourable Dr. B . R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. (b) The information is not correct. The Government of India in the War Department have directed payment of compensation to all labourers recruited by the Indian Tea Association (besides some other categories of labourers who have either lost their lives or have been injured as a result of their employment in the War projects in Assam. The Controller of Emigrant Labour has been appointed Commissioner of Workmen's Compensation for the settlement of these claims. He has paid compensation in over 4,000 cases within the last two years. The number of applications for compensation received by him on behalf of the Labourers of the Indian Tea Association alone up to 28th February 1945 is 2,612. Of these payments have been made in 2,309 cases. 217 cases have been rejected and 86 cases are under enquiry.

(c) Compensation is paid according to the rates under the Workmen's

Compensation Act in all cases coming under the operation of the Workmen's Compensation Act and in other cases *Ex-Gratia* payments of Rs. 900 for death and Rs. 1,200 for total disablement are paid. A preliminary payment up to Rs. 300 is paid in the first instance. The Honourable Member is apparently referring to this preliminary payment.

(d) The amounts of compensation ordered to be paid in lump sums are paid through the Deputy Commissioner of the Managers of Tea Estates if the dependants live in Tea Estates. In the case of minors and persons incapable of taking care of large amounts, the amounts are invested in the Post Office by the Commissioner of Labour, Assam, and remitted to them in periodical instalments by Postal Money Order. There has been some delay in the investment and remittance in the early stages as the Postal Department were unable to deal with the large number of investments but remittances are now issued systematically.

(e) As stated in reply to part (c) the rates of compensation paid in cases coming under Workmen's Compensation Act are those laid down in the schedule of the Act. In the other cases the amounts of Rs. 900 for death and Rs. 1,200 for permanent total disability have been based on the rates admissible under the Act to a labourer receiving similar cash emoluments. These rates of compensation are considered adequate.

(f) In most of the cases the dependants are minors or persons incapable of taking care of large amounts. The amount invested in these cases are paid in instalments through Postal Money Order. Only preliminary payments and lump sum payments are made through the Deputy Commissioners and Managers of Tea Estates. The amounts are sent to the Managers of Tea Estates only in cases in which the dependants live in tea Estates. It is found expedient to do so because the Managers will be in a position to identify the dependants, effect the payment promptly and forward the acquittance to the Commissioner of Workmen's Compensation. This system has worked satisfactory so far.

313

Bad Health of Labourers Returned from Assam Projects

1314. **Dewan Abdul Basith Choudhury:** (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware that several hundred labourers returned from the project works in Assam in a very bad state of health ?

(b) Is he also aware that a large number of them are still suffering from various diseases ?

(c) Is it a fact that no proper arrangements have been made for their treatment?

(d) If the replies to parts (a) to (c) be in the affirmative, does he propose to consider the desirability of representing the difficulties of these unfortunate labourers to the authorities concerned ?

(e) If the replies to parts (a) to (c) be in the negative, does he propose to enquire and lay the result of the enquiry on the table of the House ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Virulent forms of malaria and some other diseases are incidental to the work in the unhealthy jungle tracts of Assam where the war operations have been in progress; therefore some labourers returned from the projects in a bad state of health. The *Ex-Gratia* payments of compensation for deaths by diseases have therefore been specially ordered to be paid by the Government of India as there is no provision for payment of compensation in such cases under the Workmen's Compensation Act. Compensation is paid also to labourers who on returning from projects die of diseases contracted in the projects.

(b) The Government have no information.

(c) The labourers returning to Tea Gardens are treated in the Garden Hospitals as in the case of other Tea Estates labourers and those returning to villages may avail of the treatment in the total hospitals. No other medical arrangements are practicable in the case of labourers who return individually to their gardens and villages.

(d) The question does not arise in view of the answers to (a), (b) and (c).

(e) The facts ascertained have been stated above.

314

Grievances of Employees of Government of India Press, Calcutta

1315. Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) Whether the employees of the Government of India Press, Calcutta, submitted memorials on the 20th December, 1944, and 24th January, 1945;

(b) the nature of the grievances mentioned therein; and (c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. (b) The employees asked for (1) increase in basic wage and fixation of a minimum wage of Rs. 10 p.m. (2) grant of enhanced dearness allowance, (3) concessional rates of grain supply, (4) reduction in working hours, (5) extension of casual leave to piece workers, (6) abolition of the piece system, and (7) abolition of the system of classifying employees as superior and inferior and the grant to inferior employees of the privileges allowed to superior employees.

(f) Items at (2), (3), (5) and (7) referred to in part (b) are under consideration. It is not possible to consider the other items during the present emergency.

315

Hours of Work for Employees of Government of India Press, Calcutta

1316. Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please

state:

(a) the total number of hours of work per week for the employees of the Government of India Press, Calcutta;

(b) whether the Bengal Government have reduced the hours of work of the Bengal Government Presses to forty hours per week within a bonus ; and

(c) whether Government propose to reduce the hours in their Presses ; if not, why not ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) 48.

(b) The hours have been reduced to 40 per week but no bonus has been granted.

(c) No reduction can be contemplated during the present emergency.

316

Revision of Scale of Pay of Employees of Government of India Press, Calcutta

1317. Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) whether the dearness allowance granted to the Press employees corresponds to the abnormal rise in the cost of living ;

(b) when the last revision of pay of the Press employees of Calcutta took place;

(c) whether the Government Press employees in Calcutta have to pay more for rationed and non-rationed articles than the Railway and other employees ; and

(d) whether Government propose to revise the scale of pay ; and, if not, why?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The existing rates of dearness allowance were fixed with due regard to the rise in prices and a revision thereof is under consideration.

(b) In 1924. The revised rates of pay for new entrants were introduced in 1933 and 1934.

(c) Yes. They have to pay more as compared with Railway employees but the concessions admissible to them are the same as for all other employees of the Central Government.

(d) Government do not propose to undertake any general revision of pay during the present emergency.

317

Leave Benefit to Piece Workers of Government of India Press, Calcutta

1318. Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) whether the piece workers in the Calcutta Central Government Press are entitled to the same leave benefit as the salaried employees;

(b) whether the salaried employees in Delhi and Calcutta are entitled to the same casual leave; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to equalise the condition in Delhi and Calcutta ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) Salaried employees in all the Government of India Presses have been granted casual leave up to 15 days in a calendar year. Government of India have, in view of the climate and other conditions raised the limit of casual leave to 20 days per year for all Central Government servants in Delhi including the New Delhi Press employees. The higher limit of casual leave is not extended only to the Calcutta Press employees.

318

Desirability of Giving Certain Benefits to Inferior Servants of Government of India Press, Calcutta

1319. Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is not a fact that the inferior servants of the Government of India Press, Calcutta, are not entitled to get any benefit enjoyed by the superior servants, such as General Provident Fund, permanent service, house allowance, Medical leave, etc. ?

(b) If so, do Government propose to sanction all the privileges to the inferior staff as are enjoyed by the superior staff ?

(c) Is it not a fact that employees of the Government of India Press, Calcutta, appointed after 1928, are not allowed the compensation leave in lieu of attending on holidays ?

(d) Is it not a fact that only 25 per cent. allowance is granted to the employees for attending on closed holidays and that no payment is made for attending on non-closed holidays ?

(e) If so, under what circumstances have the employees appointed after 1928 been deprived of the benefit of compensation leave ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). No. They are entitled to medical leave. Permanent inferior servants are also entitled to the benefits of permanent service, e.g., pension, leave on average pay or earned leave and extraordinary leave. The question of granting them house rent and other privileges is under consideration.

(c) Yes.

(d) In lieu of compensatory leave they are paid overtime for working on closed holidays at 25 per cent above their normal rates.

(e) For administrative reasons.

319

Schemes for Technical Education of Students Abroad

1320. **Dewan Abdul Choudhury:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether there are two different schemes before Government for sending students abroad for higher technical education ? If so, what are the main features of the two schemes ?

(b) Is the training scheme sponsored by the Labour Department different from the scheme of the Education, Health and Lands Department ?

(c) Is the proposed scheme akin to the Bevin Training Scheme ?

(d) What are the technical subjects which Government contemplate to provide for the students abroad ? And what will be the duration of training on each subject ?

(e) What type of jobs, do Government contemplate to offer to the successful candidates after they return from abroad ?

(f) Are Government selecting the students on a fixed quota basis from each of the Provinces and maintaining the proportion of different communities ? If so, how many students will be sent from Bengal and Assam ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) and (b). There are two distinct schemes. The first is for sending students abroad for higher studies in technical and scientific subjects ; the second is for sending abroad technicians already employed in industry for further training or for enlarging their industrial or professional experience. The former scheme is dealt with by the Education, Health and Lands Department and the latter by Labour Department.

(c) The proposed scheme is in a way an extension of the Bevin Training Scheme. The object is to provide higher technical training for the more important supervisory post in industry.

(d) The types of training contemplated under the Labour Department scheme are : Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Radio Manufacture, Ship-building, Aeronautical Engineering, Marine Engineering, Civil Engineering, Structural Engineering, Metallurgy, Generation of Electricity, Locomotive Construction, Chemical Engineering, Fertilisers, Plastics, Glass, Steel Manufacture.

This list is not exhaustive and other types of training will be considered, if required.

Normally the period of training will be one year, but may be extended to two years in individual cases.

(f) No quotas have been allotted. Provincial Governments have been asked to make their own nominations for which they will bear the cost. Private employers are also making their own nominations. Government of India will make a final selection from these nominations.

320

Workers in Mica Mines of Gudur Division

1327. Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) the number of workers—men and women—employed for underground and surface work in the mica mines of the Gudur Division;

(b) their average daily wage and dearness allowance; (c) if it is a fact that they are engaged mostly through contractors who take a percentage of the wages; and, if so, the reasons for permitting this system ; and

(c)if Government propose to hold an inquiry about the conditions in these mines and report to this House ? If so, when ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The number of male and female workers employed in Mica Mines in the Gudur area is approximately 7,000 and 4,000 respectively. No women are employed underground.

(b) Average daily wage is Rs. 12 for men and Rs. 7 for women. As wages were raised recently, no dearness allowance is paid.

(c) As far as is known labour is engaged and paid direct by the mine-owners, and not through contractors.

(d) No; the second part does not arise.

321

Applying Factories Act, etc. to Mica Splitting Factories in Gudur Division

1328. Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) if it is a fact—(i) that the Factories Act is not applied to the Mica Splitting Factories in the Gudur Division;

(ii) that the large majority of workers employed here are women and that they receive no advantage of the Maternity Benefits Act, (iii) that there are no arrangements for the care of infants and children of the women workers, and (iv) that the premises are in an insanitary condition without sufficient ventilation; and

(b) whether Government propose to take steps to apply the Factories and Maternity Benefits Acts to these factories, improve labour conditions and provide adequate facilities for the care of infants and children of the women workers and report to this House about this matter?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b). The administration of the Factories Act and of the Madras Maternity Benefits Act is the responsibility of the Provincial Government. As regards a survey of the working conditions of labour in the Mica Splitting Factories in Gudur Division, the Labour Investigation Committee is engaged on the work. Government will consider in due course proposals which will be made by the Planning Committee for labour which Government hope to set up after the Labour Investigation Committee's work is over.

322

Rule re Appointment of Qualified Copyholders and Revisers as

Junior Readers in Government of India Presses

1330. Mr. **Badri Dutt Pande** : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether Government have recently received any memorials from the employees of any Government of India Presses regarding their hardships created by the anomalies which exist in the present rule governing the appointment of qualified Copyholders and Revisers in the Junior Readers' post ?

(b) is it a fact that in May, 1940 the Government of India Press Workers' Union, New Delhi, sent a representation to the Secretary, Labour Department, fully approved by Mr. Asaf Ali, M.L.A. (Central), who was the President of the Union, for amending the rule so that earlier passed candidates might get preference over subsequent qualified men ?

(c) Do government propose to consider the advisability of amending the existing rule in the light of these memorials ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : (a) Memorials have been received from three copyholders of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, but there is no allegation of hardship or anomaly in the present rules governing appointment to readers' posts.

(b) Yes.

(c) The memorials will be considered on their merits.

323

Irregular Appointments in Certain Branches of C.P.W.D.

1351. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang : (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether under the rules about communal representation in the services, an appointment made against those rules should be cancelled ?

(b) Is it a fact that it was found that an irregular appointment of a Sikh was made in the Horticulture Department of the Central Public Works Department ?

(c) Is it a fact that the appointment was not cancelled, but the Muslim, who should have been appointed to that vacancy, was assigned his correct position in the seniority list ?

(d) Is it a fact that some irregular appointments were also made in the cadre of Electrical Engineers ?

(e) Is it a fact that it was decided not to cancel those appointments but to assign the Muslims their correct position in the seniority list ?

(f) Is it a fact that subsequently the orders about seniority were also cancelled and seniority was fixed according to the dates of the irregular appointments of non-Muslims ? If so, why ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) Two vacancies in the grade of Horticulture Subordinate arose simultaneously, of which the first was reserved for a Muslim and the other was unreserved. A Muslim was selected against the Muslim vacancy and a Sikh against the unreserved vacancy. The Sikh joined his appointment earlier than the Muslim, as the latter was employed elsewhere and could not be released in time by the office where he was employed. As the first of the two appointments was earmarked for the Muslim he was placed higher than the Sikh in the seniority list.

(d), (e) and (f). Certain officiating appointments in the grade of Electrical Engineer were made without observing the strict order of communal rotation laid down in the orders regarding representation of minority communities in the public service. These appointments had to be made at very short notice in connection with urgent war works in Eastern India and it was administratively impracticable to follow the prescribed communal rotation in making these appointments. The appointments were not, therefore, cancelled, and the seniority of the officers concerned was fixed in accordance with their respective dates of appointment. No orders fixing the seniority of any Muslim officer in the grade of Electrical Engineer were passed and cancelled later.

324

Affording Certain Maternity Benefits to Women Mine Workers

1358. Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) in pursuance of his answer to starred question No. 437, asked on the 21st February, 1945, whether Government have examined the matter of extending the time when women before and after delivery should not be allowed to go within the mines;

(b) whether Government have considered the matter of every mine being provided with creches for children of mothers working in mines; and

(c) whether, in view of the fact that statements have been made in the House by Members with personal experience that these creches are not functioning regularly. Government have taken or are taking steps to see that these are properly functioning ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The necessary Legislation is already before the House.

(b) and (c). The whole question of the compulsory provision of creches in mines is under consideration.

325

Scheme for Training in Technical Industries Abroad

1359. Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) apart from the training given in universities to students, as mentioned in the press communique of the Education, Health and Lands Department,

whether Government have any scheme to depute and train men in technical industries, so that they can be used in the starting of industries in the post-war period;

(b) whether the Government of India have negotiated with the Government or industrialists of the U. K. or the U.S.A. to get such men trained; and

(c) if so, in what industries ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. Attention of the Honourable Member is invited to Labour Department letter No. TRC-11-1140, dated the 12th December, 1944, a copy of which was placed on the table of the House on the 14th February, 1945 in reply to his question No. 198.

(b) With the Governments.

(c) Negotiations on general lines and not confined to specific industries have taken place.

326

Tonnage on Which Soft Coke Cess has been Realised

104. Mr. K. C. Neogy : Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the tonnage on which the Soft Coke Cess Committee realised its cess on despatch on Soft Coke during 1941 to 1944 ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The information is as follows:

1941	957,553 tons	1943	354,835 tons
1942	431,858 tons	1944	445,721 tons

327

Miscellaneous Departments

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman : Sir, I move:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 10,00,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1945 in respect of ' Miscellaneous Departments '."

Mr. **President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 10,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1945 in respect of ' Miscellaneous Departments '."

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar : The explanation given on page 27 is:

" Due to the setting up of additional Provincial and Regional Labour Supply Committees, Labour Supply Depots and Labour Supply Bureaux."

I find on page 12 under the Demand for Labour:

" Creation of the Directorate of Unskilled Labour Supply for coordination of the work of the provincial and regional labour supply committees and the labour supply depots." I think, Sir, there is a repetition. I should like to know what is the difference between the two.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member) : That demand was

quite different. It was for the pay of officers, it refers to the salaries of officers, while this is quite a different thing. This is on account of opening of certain labour supply committees, labour supply bureaux and labour supply depots. This is the cost incurred in regard to workmen and that refers only to salaries of officers of the Secretariat.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I will read it again : Due to setting up of additional Provincial and Regional Labour Supply Committees....."

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : This is for co-ordination, that is done in the Secretariat. The item on page 12 refers to salary of officers working in the Secretariat, while this demand refers to work done outside the Secretariat.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

" That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 10,00,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council on the 31st day of March, 1945 in respect of ' Miscellaneous Departments '." The motion was adopted.

328

Controlled Rates of Price of Rice in Dhanbad Sub-Division

1464. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state the present total controlled rates of price per maund of the different kinds of rice in Dhanbad Sub-Division in the Province of Bihar ?

(b) At what rates is the Provincial Government charging the two Coal Trade Organisations for supplying rice for the benefit of colliery labour ? Is any incidental charge realised by that Government from the said Organisations in addition to the controlled price of rice in Dhanbad Sub-Division ? If so, at what rate and for what reasons ?

(c) Has any complaint been received recently from the Indian Collieries Union stating that the Joint Pools are still charging from its members approximately Rs. 4 per maund of rice, over and above the total controlled prices ?

(d) Has any comprehensive report been obtained by Government in this or any connected matter, from the Welfare Commissioner who is stationed at Dhanbad?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) The wholesale control rates for rice in Dhanbad Sub-Division are Rs. 11 and Rs. 12 per maund for coarse and medium qualities respectively. The corresponding retail rates for the 2 qualities of rice are -/4/71/2 and -/5/-* per seer.

(b) The Provincial Government is charging the two coal trade organisations the basic wholesale control rate at the source of supply of Rs. 9 per maund for coarse and Rs. 10 per maund for medium quality plus -/4/-* per maund to cover administrative charges. The organisations have to pay in addition the cost of the bags and the actual incidental charges incurred in effecting despatches of rice from the source of supply to the consuming

centres. (c) Yes, Sir. (d) No.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : With regard to (b), is the Honourable Member in a position to tell the House whether the resulting price which is charged to the collieries is higher than the total controlled price, having regard to all the different levies which are paid ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am afraid I have not made any calculations.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : That is really the point of the complaint.

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar** : My Honourable friend can make the calculations.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : With regard to (d). I take it that this officer is an officer of the Government of India ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : In view of the frequent complaints received in regard to this question, will the Honourable Member consider the desirability of obtaining a report from this officer as regards these matters ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: This work will not fall within the purview of his duties. This is a matter for the Provincial Governments.

Mr. K. C. Neogy : The Honourable Member is aware that the complaint amounts to this, that the Provincial Government is not fully cooperating with the Central Government in the matter of making rice supplies to the collieries reasonably cheap ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I will get into touch with the Provincial Government, but I do not think I can ask the Coal Welfare Commissioner to deal with this matter.

329

Area under Irrigation in Baluchistan

1469. Mr. **Abdul Qaiyum**: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) the total area brought under irrigation in Baluchistan since the war began;

(b) how much of such area was brought under irrigation by Government and how much by private enterprise;

(c) the total amount spent by the Government on such projects; and

(d) whether any sums were advanced to Zamindars for bringing land under irrigation ?

The Honourable **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar**: (a), (b) and (c). No substantial areas have been brought under irrigation in Baluchistan since the war began; but two flood control schemes, sanctioned by Government, costing about Rs. 68,000, will add about 1,000 acres. As a result of more intensive cultivation of lands under irrigation and expansion of dry farming coupled with the Administration's procurement measures, Baluchistan has become a surplus province with wheat, paddy and Jowari for export to other provinces. (d) The

information is being collected.

330

Liquor Shops in Vicinity of Railway Coal Mines

1470. **Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan** : Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state :

(a) if it is a fact that there are liquor shops in the vicinity of Railway coal mines; and, if so, the days and hours when they are open;

(b) whether the management of these mines are aware that these liquor shops tempt miners to waste their wages on drink and ruin their health and that, consequently, the attendance of the miners and the output of coal in the mines on the day following the pay-day is adversely affected;

(c) if the reply to (b) above is in the negative, whether Government propose to call for a report on the matter; and

(d) whether Government also propose to ask the authorities concerned either to abolish liquor shops in mining areas, or to restrict the hours of opening and the quantity of liquor sold per individual and to close them fully on pay-days ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : (a) Yes. There are liquor shops in the vicinity of coal mines owned by railways as well as by others. I regret I have at present no information about the days and hours of opening but I shall obtain it and place it on the table of the House. (b) No.

(c) Government will call for a general report on the relations between drink and the health and production of miners.

(d) Excise administration is a Provincial subject. On receiving a report, however, Government will consider if any recommendations appear necessary in regard to liquor shops.

I should add that about December 1944, the retail prices for distillery liquor in the Bihar coalfields was increased and the Provincial Government is watching the effect of this increase of prices before considering any other action to restrict the consumption of liquor. A report received last year from Bengal suggests that there has been no evidence of excessive consumption of drink in the Bengal coalfields area.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan : Sir, in view of the fact that the coal situation is very grave in this country and that it is necessary to have the utmost output from coal mines, will Government consider the importance of taking immediate steps to close down the liquor shops in their vicinity, even though it is a provincial matter ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I am afraid we have no control as the Honourable Member suggests.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: May I know if the liquor shops were located in the vicinity with the consent of the Total Government ?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : I say, that is a matter for Provincial Government.

Contents

PART VIII